

俺と悪魔のブルーズ

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2



俺と悪魔のブルーズ 2

平本アキラ



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ARTISTWORK
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After losing the form of his last and only he thought for himself better talent in just one night. It takes on a trip with the "Horse" the legendary literature Robert Johnson, who is famous for "selling his soul to the Devil at a crossroads." The fiction story begins with the mysterious life of the grandfather of all pop music legends. Confronted on from the previous volume's shocking more-than-lifetime story, he has straight into a nightmarish anti-chaotic world. The American South in the early 1930s. The black literature like blues and became a legend, and the white literature like blues and became a legend. What the classic meaning of these two traditions young men bring forward as a disaster to their body!



666

定価：本体

円(税別)

S t o r y

Having exchanged the lives of his wife and child for incredible guitar skill in the course of a night,

El leaves his home to go on a journey with the Devil! During his trip across the central United States with his "devilish" partner Mr.

El spends a night playing guitar in a stranger's.

Because of this, he meets a man who wants to take advantage of that amazing guitar playing.

Separated from his partner, El is forced into a car with this man, Clyde Barrett. A petty white knocker in an era of tough times.

ME & THE DEVIL DUES 2

俺と悪魔のブルース
2

With a .32-20 In Your Right Hand
Akira Hiramoto

Me & The Devil Blues

Volume 2 12-28 Blues

Hironaka Akira

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THIS IS A
NIGHTMARE

...







WHY'S HE
MAKIN' A
NIGGER
HE JUST
MET SIT
IN THE
FRONT
SEAT
NEXT TO
HIM?



WHY'D
YOU TALK
ABOUT ABOUT
ABOUT THE
HELL OF ME
THINKING?



THEY
COULD
KILL US
ANYTIME
THEY
WANT,
AND AIN'T
NO ONE
CAN DO
A DAMN
THING
ABOUT IT!

WE
AIN'T
NOTHIN'
BUT
THINGS
TO
THEM!



I SHOULD
KNOW
THAT I CAN
DO ANYTHING
BUT I
WOULD OFFER
ME TO HAVE
ALL MY
OWN...

























































WITH
THEIR OWN
BODIES...
THAT'S MY
LAW.

ANYONE
WHO STEALS
MY BODY-
GUARD PAYS
BACK THE
DOLLAR...



ANY
PROBLEM
WITH
YOUR
BODY?

WORK?



I'LL WORK
HOWEVER
MANY TIMES
AS MANY
THINGS AS
YOU WANT,
MR. KING.

AND
THEN
YOU'LL
LET ME
GO?



WELL, THIS
PROPOSAL
HERE GOES
AT LEAST A
HUNDRED
DOLLARS
FACTOR IN
ALL MATH'S
FACTS...

NOPE,
IN YOUR
CASE...



A MAN
STEALS A
DOLLAR FROM
MR. KING
BUTTER, GIVE
A POUND OF
MEAT OFF HIS
BODY IN
RETURN.



A POUND
A DOLLAR
THAT'S THE
PRICE OF
HUMAN MEAT
ON MY LAND.



WELL,
IT DON'T
TARE A
GONNA
TO SEE



YOU GONNA
HAPPA DRY
WITH ALL
THE FLESH
IN YOUR
BODY







WELL, YOU
HEARD THE
MAN.



ROBBY,
YOU
TWO



BUT I
DON'T
GO
NO.

WELL, ANY
MAN CRAZY
ENOUGH TO GO
THAT FAST
WON'T HAVE
ANY BALLS
OF STEEL.
SO TO CHOP
OFF HIS CLOCK
INSTEAD.



ROBBY,
YOU
TWO



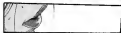






















WASTE ANOTHER TIME
HERE AND THE
ONLY WAY I
LEAVE THIS
COUNTRY IS
IN A COFFIN





KILL
PAPA

BUT...
SHOULD
WE KILL
HIM?



AND IF
THEY DON'T
KILL
HIM, WE'D
DOUBT A
STORY WOULD
TAKEN



BUT IF
PAPA DIES
AND THERE'S
NO MORE
TALKING TO
ALL, THEN
THERE'S
NO NEED
TO RUN



WITH THIS
DANGER, THEN
IT
IS BETTER
LEFT FOR
US TO
GO AWAY





















8/32-20 Blues ④





AND THE
LOOK ON THAT
TWO-TO-LAND'S
FACE WHEN HE
SAW WE WERE
SLEEPING WITH
THAT OTHER
GUY. HOW
I'VE BEEN
WOUND UP
ABOUT IT
SINCE WE
WENT AWAY.



A MAN THAT CAN
DON'T SHUT UP
IF HE WANTS
TO. HE
WANTS TO WITH
A GIRL YOUNG
ENOUGH TO BE
HIS MOTHER
AND SISTER.







WELL OF
THE HELL
/ THE HELL
DOES IT



DO
I, WILL
ABANDON THE
BOTTLE...
ANYWAY



AND
THEY
WILL
BE
GONE
GONE
GONE
GONE











IT WAS
HIM...



HE
WAS
THE
ONE



THAT
OLD
MAN!!!

CLYDE
KILLED

















WELL...



NOW
HERE'S
THE BIG
QUESTION...
HOW DID
I WIND UP
IN THAT
LITTLE
PSYCHO-
HANT...?



IT'S BECAUSE
YOU STOPPED
PLAYING THAT
DARK OUTLET
OF YOURS?

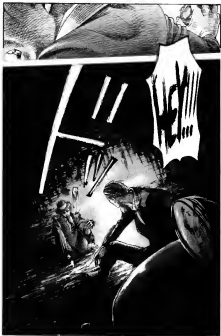


AND THERE
WAS ALSO A
SLIGHT BLOW
TO SAMUEL-
LENN... HOW
AM I CRAZY OR
DO YOU AGREE
THAT I GOT THE
RIGHT TO SEE
WHY THIS USED TO
HAPPEN TO ME?



















BLACK
GRIFFIN
WHITE
SON
DON'T
WANT
NOTHING
IN THIS
TIME
AND
PLACE

ANY
MOMENT
AROUND
ANY
MOMENT
ANYTIME



HE COULD
KILL ME AT
ANY MOMENT.
I DON'T KNOW
WHICH BREATH
COULD BE
MY LAST...



THROWING
ROCKS AT
PEOPLE!
JUST
'CAUSE
HE GOT A
LITTLE
UPSET!

BESIDES,
HE'S JUST
A
HOODLUM
A
MURDERING
THIEF!



I HATE
SUCKER
PUNCH
HE'S GOING
TO BE
IN A FEW
YEARS
ANYWAY
KILL HIM
BEFORE
HE KILLS
ME...

IF IT
HIT ME
IN THE
HEAD,
I'D BE
DEAD
RIGHT
NOW
THAT'S
RIGHT



...
THAT'S
RIGHT.
WE'RE
ALONE
...







I FIGURED
I'D GET
A BIT MORE
USE OUTTA
HIM...

WELL,
DAMN...
LOOKS
LIKE I
HAD THE
WRONG
IDEA
ABOUT
HIM.



TO BE
DONE
WITH A
PLAIN
FOOL.

BUT
THERE
AIN'T
NOTHIN'

















THIS
CAN'T...
THIS CAN'T
BE THE LAST
GUITAR I'LL
EVER PLAY
IN MY LIFE





I'VE BEEN
DREAMING
MY ENTIRE
LIFE,
DREAMING
OF THE
DAY THAT
I COULD
MAKE
SOUNDS
LIKE THIS

PLEASE!
DON'T
SHOOT!
JUST
LET ME
PLAY A
LITTLE
BIT
LONGER



THE
SOUNDS
I
COULDN'T
MAKE
BECAUSE
I
WAS
TOO
CLOSED
TOO STUPID
TOO
UNWORTHY

THE
SOUNDS
I
ONLY
EVER
HEARD
INSIDE
MY HEAD



THE
"PERFECT"
PERFORMANCE
I'VE ALWAYS
IMAGINED

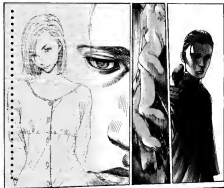
SOUNDS
THAT
HAVE
BORN
MATERIALIZED
BY
"LIBERATION"
THIS CRAZY
LAND
OF MINE...



EVEN
GREATER

AND
MORE















CLIMB
IN

THERE'S A WOMAN
VERY
CLOSE
TO MY
HEAD!

SHE
HELPED
ME
GET
OUT
THE
GUN...

BY
SHOOTING
ME
DOWN
FIRST...



BECAUSE I
WENT
UP
AND
DOWN
THE
FLOOR
AND
I
WILL
OFFER
A
BIG
REWARD...

I
WANT
TO
GO
ON
AN
OTHER
TRIP
AND
SEE
SOME
MORE...

I
WANT
TO
GO
ON
AN
OTHER
TRIP
AND
SEE
SOME
MORE
LITTLE
TRICKS...



BUT
YOUR
GUNS
JUST
ARE
THE
BEST
OF
MY
GUN...









NO LAMEN
AUDIO



NO LAMEN
AUDIO



WHEN YOU
PLAY CARD
SCENE
YOU THINK
"BUT" WHEN
IT'S THE
WORLD THAT
MIGHT



I JUST
GET THAT
THAT IMAGE
FROM
THAT I
THINK IT





HEY GU...
WHY DON'T
YOU HAVE
A WORD
TOO BY
HONNET



OH
COME ON,
DON'T
MISSE
ABOUT
THAT.

...
SHIT,
I CAN'T

...
I DON'T
EVEN
KNOW
THE
BOSS

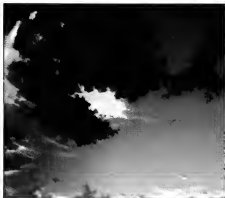


HUNT



WOULD
SEE WHAT
A GREAT
GAL SHE
IS

WE GOT
A LONG
WAY
TO GO
TLL TELL
TO ALL
ABOUT
HER





LOOK AT
THAT FIELD
BEHIND
US! IT'S A
JAIL! THAT
DON'T SAY
NOTHING!



THE
GARDEN
OF
THE
LIFE
AND
LIFE
MAY















THE
GODS
ARE
FUCKING
UP
EVERYTHING



THE
GODS
ARE
FUCKING
UP
EVERYTHING

THE
GODS
ARE
FUCKING
UP
EVERYTHING



THE
GODS
ARE
FUCKING
UP
EVERYTHING

THE
GODS
ARE
FUCKING
UP
EVERYTHING

THE
GODS
ARE
FUCKING
UP
EVERYTHING

THE
GODS
ARE
FUCKING
UP
EVERYTHING

THE
GODS
ARE
FUCKING
UP
EVERYTHING



THE
GODS
ARE
FUCKING
UP
EVERYTHING



THE
GODS
ARE
FUCKING
UP
EVERYTHING

THE
GODS
ARE
FUCKING
UP
EVERYTHING



THE
"BOMB
BUST"



WELL,
YOU NEED
PLATE
T OME
MORE,
TWO "

200-
MAY-
21



AND AFTER
THAT...
OF COURSE HE
WANT TO...
THAT...
DOES?

A
AGONY
OF

200-
MAY-
21



THE
"BOMB
BUST"
WAS
BUST UP?

ON
T...
21

WHAT YOU GOT
A PROBLEM
WITH THAT?
I DON'T WANT
IT A LOT
DO I...
200-
MAY-
21



DO
YOU AND I
WANT TO...
A...
200-
MAY-
21

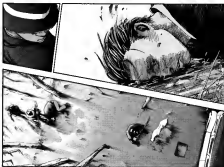










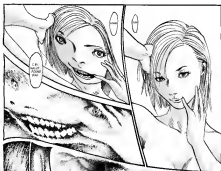






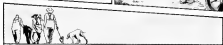
✂ 10/32-20 Blues 6











Twelve...
Eight... I
remember
now.





WELL, IF
LEAST THEY
WEREN'T
DRIVEN...

THAT'S A
GOOD
POINT, I
MAY
BE A LITTLE
BIT
OF A
DICKHEAD...

JUST
WANTED
TO
BE
A
LITTLE
BIT
OF
A
DICKHEAD...

THE
NAME
OF
THE
FIRM
WAS
RECORDED...























YOU
THINK IT'S
FUNNY, DON'T
A GUY
CAN COME
A GUY?
WELL, IT
DOES THAT
GUY'S
WELL!



WELL!



YOU
THINK I
DON'T
KNOW A
GUY
THAT
DOES
THE
SAME
THAT
GUY?
WELL, IT
DOES THAT
GUY'S
WELL!



PROBATION
CAN BE
BUT
FOR ALL
I CARE
THE
GUY
WELL!

* *Public Enemy* was a low profit film. The production code and corporations of which, in the United States (based in 1930) reported in HX.











DAMN... I
 DON'T THE HELL UP
 WITH THIS PLACE... I
 CAN'T A MAN ENJOY
 A COCK IN PLACE...
 I'M GONNA HAPPA
 SHOOT SOMEBODY!



DON'T YOU KNOW
 WHAT'S A COCK,
 THERE?
 DON'T YOU
 KNOW YOU CAN'T
 EAT A COCK THAT
 MUCH COCKS IN A
 DIFFERENT
 HONORARY



LOOK AT
 YOU... REMEMBER ALL
 THOSE... AND
 SO... COCKS
 DON'T IN
 WHEN COCK
 LITTLE COCK
 COULD BE
 IN COCKS
 DON'T COCK

DON'T
 LEAVE IT,
 ALL
 THE COCKS
 TO COCK
 COCK? LET GO

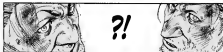
















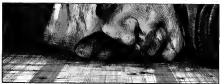




11/32-20 Films 7











BECAUSE IT
SEEMS TO BE
YOUR FIRST
TIME TROUPO
THESE DAYS...
WHERE YOU
FROM, THEN?





I WOULD
BE A
REINFORCED
MENT

WELL, THE
FOURTH
IS



THE OTHER DAY
BOSS SAYS DO
SEE IF THERE'S
ANY INTERESTING
NEWS FOR ON
OUT-OF-STATE?
SO I TOOK OFF
AND HERE I AM

JUST A TINY
BACKWATER
MAN, SEE
AND I'M COMING
THROUGH
MY TRAINING
SO BASICALLY
THEY JUST
SEND ME ON
ERRANDS



HEHE-
HEHEHE

AN AGENT
WELL, NOT SAY
IN FACT, IT'S
BE DELETED
IF YOU COULD
INTERVIEW ME
AS A TOWN
THAT COULD
ENLIGHTEN THE
TOWN MINDS
OF PROSECUTION



DE-
LETED?

I MIGHT
WELL, IF
I SHOULD
NOT IF
SOME POLICE
GET AGGRESSIVE
WITH THEM
THEY HAVE
A REINFORCED
MENT



SOMETIMES A
TOWN IS JUST
THINKS THEY
DON'T WANT
A REINFORCED
MENT

YOU
SEE



THE
PROPERTY THAT
GAVE HIM A
REPUTATION
TO BE CON-
SIDERED...



HELL...

AND
WHAT'S
THAT
GIVEN
IN THE
RECKONING
FOR...?



WHAT'S IT
GONE THERE?
WHAT YOU
GONE USE IT
FOR, HARRY?
LET'S HAVE AN
EXPLANATION!



NO
ANSWERS
GIVEN? NEED
A GUY
TO HAVE
A STORY
TO TELL
HARRY?

SHT...
I WAS FIGURIN'
PASSIN' MYSELF
OFF AS A
NEWSPAPER WRITER
WOULD GET ME
A CHANCE TO
SHUFF AROUND
FOR EU, BUT IT
BACKFIRE'D!
NOW THEY'RE
GRIFFIN' AT ME...



NO,
WAIT

DURRY!
WANT'S AN' ANGER!
IT'S A GUNPOW
GAY... AND THE GUNPO
WAS LEFT IN THE
PACKSHEET BY
SOMEONE ELSE
FROM THE PAPER...
HOW'S THAT?
WELL IT WORKS IT!

NO!
THEY'LL
DEMAND
I PLAY IT
FOR 'EM

HOW
SO I
EXPLAIN
THE
GUTTER?
A
HOBBY?

ON THE
GROUND?
YOU
KIDNAST!

WELL FINE!
SOMEONE
TOLD ME THAT
TWO DAYS AGO

I
FOUND
IT?



TRYIN'
TO
BLUFF
ME?!

IS
HE





ANYBODY'D
LOOK
THROU AT
A WHITE
MAN
DRIVIN' A
FORD VS
WITH A
SUITAR IN THE
BACK?



WHAT IF
THEY'D
NEVER THERE
WAS A
WHITE MAN
WITH THE
NEEDIN THEY
COULD
NOT THERE
WAS A
SUITSAR AND
A FORD IN
THE BACK?



WHAT IF
THEY'D
NEVER
CON-
NECTION
BETWEEN
THESE GUYS
AND THE
FEDERAL
AND
ANYBODY
IN IT?



WHAT AM I, OR
FOR AS THEY'RE
CONCERNED?
SOME NASSAR-LVIN'
WHITE TESSH WHO
COULD BE PLOTTING
SOMETHING-WHAT?



WHAT WILL
THEY DO WITH
THESE LIKE
THAT?



I COULD GET
BEAT DOWN
OUTTA TOWN
OR IF WORST
COMES TO WORST,
I MIGHT NEVER
LEAVE ALIVE



WITH
THE
WAS
IS IT
CAN'T
THINK
STRAIGHT



ON
THE
SUITAR
THE
SUITSAR
IS
SOME
WELL



I'M FUCKED!
WHAT'S THE
BEST SHOT I
HAVE?
WHAT
WHAT WAS
THE QUESTION
ABOUT?



WELL, DON'T
WASTE
YOUR
EXPLANATION

GOD, DAMMIT.
WHY THE HELL
AM I BEING
INTERVIEWED
IN THE FIRST
PLACE. I
WISH I HAD
THE ANSWERS
TO THOSE
QUESTIONS



IN MY
CART

OUTTA...?



LOOK
I DON'T KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE
TRYING TO
PULL, BUT
DON'T FOR
GIVE ME
OUT OF IT...







THE
HELL
IT
WAS!!

ENOUGH
OF THIS SHIT,
BOY!!!
THE DAMN
OUTRIP'S BEEN
IN YOUR CAR
THE WHOLE
TIME!!!



THERE'S
NO
JUSTICE.

OUTRIP?









IS IT
THEIR
?

OH
SHIT
NOT?



WELL, WOULD
THE
ANALYST?



AND
I'M
SURE
IT'S
A
MISTAKE
TAKING
THIS
STEP



I'M
JUST
WONDERING
IF
THE
ANALYST
CAN
DO
IT
ON
THE
SPOT



ALONE.

ALONE.







YOU
HAD
LEFT
ALONE

I
'M
VERY
SORRY



YOU
HAD
LEFT
ALONE
YOU
HAD
LEFT
ALONE
YOU
HAD
LEFT
ALONE

YOU
ARE
A
VERY
GOOD
MAN
MY
FRIEND
I
LL
DO
YOU
THAT



YOU
WANT
IT?



IT
SEEMS
THAT
I
WANT
IT
FOR
SOMETHING





SHAME
THIS TOWN
AND YOU
SHAME ME!!
AND MORE
AND MORE
YOU CALL
LITTLE TUPP
A LAD...
YOU AND
YOUR
POOR OF A
MIND!

AFTER
ALL THE
SPOONERS
YOU LEFT
BEHIND THE
FLOOR OF
COURTESY!
WELL NOW
YOU DON'T
GET THE
ENTIRE
SIDE OF
TOWN AGAIN
ABOUT
THE SHAME
OF THE TOWN!



SWIT
...



I DON'T
WANT TO BE
STOP NOW
BUT YOU
ARE GOING
FOR YOUR
OWN...
WELL
WELL



WELL
THAT ARE
SOME
MOMENTS
TWO IS
DON'T
MOMENTS
LADDER
OVERIT



WHEN
THAT I
DON'T
WALK
UPON
THAT
DAY
AGAIN



SAY
SAY
SAY



WOULDN'T
DREAM OF IT
SHEETS (SHEETS)
I KNOW YOU ARE A
MAN OF YOUR WORD
A VERIFIABLE
JUST SAYING
YES...



HEAT
WAT - ARE YOU
SAYING YOU THINK
I'M THE KING OF
THE ROAD? DON'T
GIVE ME THAT
LOOK HE LOVES
A BETT



YOU THINK...
THAT MESSING
OUT (MESSING)
WORTH
SOMETHING
ON HIS...?



TAKE
A LOOK



IF THERE
IS, ILL
FORGET
ABOUT THE
MONEY YOU
OKE HE
FROM
TODAY'S
BANK







12/32-20 Blues, Part ⑧





An
"event"...?



When
you say
"event," Mr.
McDonald?

















So for us,
a lynching
is like a
little town
festival.

Well,
we don't get
much en-
tertainment
here in this
little town of
ours.

Nice
detective
work! Yup,
that's me in
the picture.



Next
lynching,
I'm gonna
buy me that
liver before
anybody else
gets to it...
and I'm gonna
feed it to
Jackie.

I wanted
to buy his
liver, but
somebody
beat me to
it! I was
awful mad.



Huh?
Where?

Look!
I'm in the
picture,
too. See?
See?

Right
here!
See?



Everybody in
town wanted to
get in front of
the camera,
so they had to
push you two in
to the back-
ground. Right?
Ha, ha, ha.

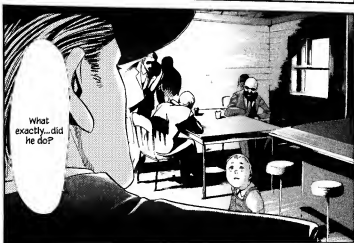


My
neighbor's
dog! He's
real smart!



Jackie?
Who's
that?







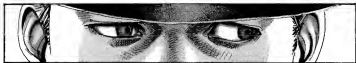


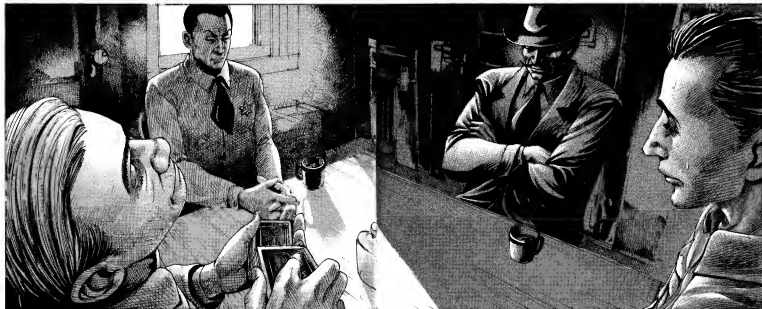


I'm talking
to Mr.
Thornton
right now!
Don't you
interrupt!

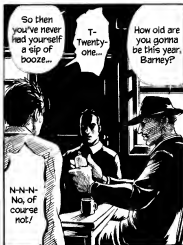
Shut
up!











So then
you've never
had yourself
a sip of
booze...

T-
Twenty-
one...

How old are
you gonna
be this year,
Barney?

N-N-N-
No, of
course
not!



Yes...
the death
penalty.

Y...



That's
right...even
the tiniest
little brat
in this town
knows that.



Well, then. Of
course
you've
never had
yourself
a drink.



Well...
eleven to
be exact.

...com-
pletely
illegal
in this
town?

Hey,
Roland...
what's it
been...about
ten years
since Mr.
McDonald
made
booze...







...this...



Sh-Sh-Sheriff!

Hold
him down,
fellas!



Wh-
Wh-
Wh-





S-Stop!
Wh-Wh-
What're
you-
Sheriff!

I-I-



...to
die-

I don't
want...

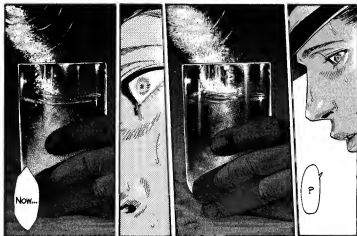


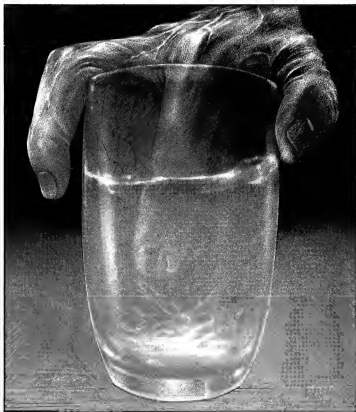
Urrmph...
S-SU-

Hahh...
hahh...















Okay.

Okay.

You, too, fellas.

Go on, drink up.



Feel better?

Now we're all guilty.

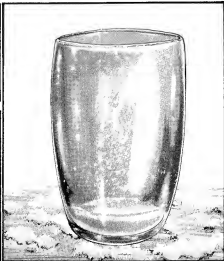


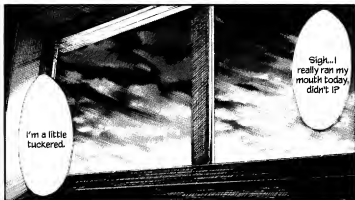
Sheriff...



Sh-Sh-

You found it, so I wanted you to get the first taste.









...shit.



Huh?

This ain't fair,
Sheriff..
why am I
the only
one who's
gotta
stay
here?

Th-
This
ain't
fair..



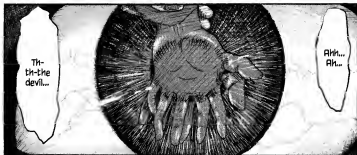
















Sh-
Sheriff!



Round about twenty years ago, I did see a white man with six fingers on his left hand.



But...
this is...



...a man with ten fingers on one hand.



Well, it
don't really
matter
what's
wrong with
this here
nigger.



Either way,
come Sunday
they're gonna
lynch him, and
send him on up
to heaven...ain't
that right?



Y-Yes
indeed.





Yes indeed, Sheriff Sanders.



Isn't that right?

A nigger with some extra fingers on his hand don't strike me as much of a problem.



Okay, we'll just pretend we didn't see anything. Tomorrow morning, we'll act like we just noticed it.



Home.

Hey, Conners... where you going?





Th-
That's
right.

You can't go
outside now,
Mr. Corners.
At least wait
till you sober
up.

Hey,
now...
hold
up!

What?
Hey...

W
h
y
p

Let go
of me.

Because if they
find out about
the booze, it'll
be the end for
all of us!



How...
how can
you two
be so
calm?

That's
it...I
can't
take
this
any-
more.

H
A
H
H

H
A
H
H

H
A
H
H

H
A
H
H



Huh?



Can't you...

...feel it?



Th-This nigger...

Something ain't right with him.



That's not what I mean.

No... no...

We all saw it.

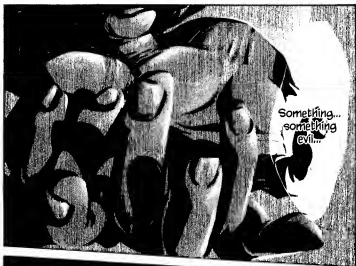
Of course something ain't right.



It's just... I mean... I don't quite know exactly, but...

I'm not talking about how many fingers he's got.









I-I-It's Mr.
McDonald!



Mc-
Donald?



Mc-



No...

Better drink
some water.

Coffee!

Ahhh!
This
is bad.



Shit!
What're
we gonna
do,
Sanders?

Shit!
That fool
Barney
is out
there...
hey,
Roland!

Go
round
up that
idiot!
We can't
have him
coming in
here!

Right...





Sorry
for all the
ruckus.

Well,
hello there,
Mr. McDonald.



Did you
have some
business
to attend
to with the
boss? I'm
just on my
way to pick
him up now.



That Fool
Barney
is always
making
trouble. I
don't know
what's
gotten into
him now.



WHISPER

Christ...
scared
the hell
out of
me.



Huh?

If you've got
a message
for him, I
can pass it
on for you.



A
h
h

There's
my
driver.

Could
you stop
for a mo-
ment, Mr.
Reporter?









Once I
know for
sure, I can
figure out
what my
next move
is.

That's a very
break. Maybe
I'll be able to
see if this
negro they're
talking about
is R.I.



Well, since I'm here as a guest of Mr. McDonald's, I should be okay. Looks like the sheriff answers to the old man.

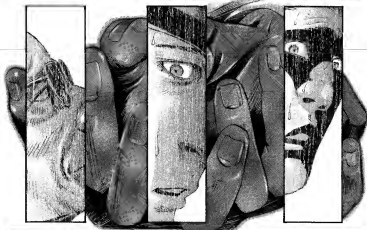


Not only did I bust out of jail...I just did plenty of robbin', too...ain't exactly where I wanna be.

But... the sheriff's office?



This is him, Mr. McDonald.



Huh?
Those
fingers/
My God/
Is that...?

Wh-What
the hell?

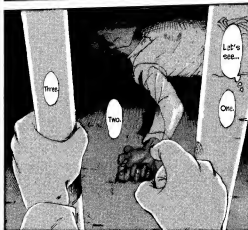
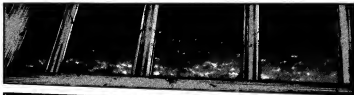




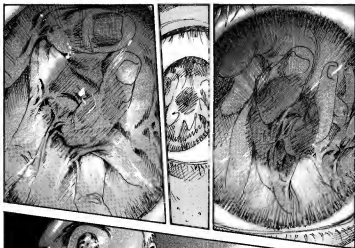














Huh?
But wait,
how many
fingers
should I say
he has? Five?
Ten?

He's got ten fingers,
but he's got two
hands...so that means
he's got five fingers
on each hand. That
Barney is such a fool.



It's
stopped.

Huh?
The
music...





Huh?



Hang on. I'm almost done.

Okay, okay... I'm sorry.

cough



Little lobby...

What's wrong? Still counting?



Huh? Now he's only got one hand... but a second ago I swear he had two.

PLUP



That sound... I hear it again.

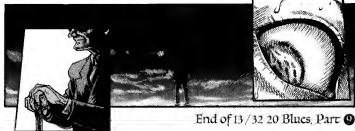


Was I seeing things?

Huh? Where'd it go? That's weird.







End of 13/32 20 Blues, Part ⑨





The story of RJ will continue
in *Me and the Devil Blues:*
The Unreal Life of Robert Johnson,
Book Two

Credits for the original Japanese edition:

Supervising Editor: Takashi 'Hotoke' Nagai

Firearms Consultant: Heihachiro Matsumoto

Researchers: Nobumasa Sakagami, Naohiro Mutou

Title Logo Design: Ken 'Razzo' Inatomi

Layout: Terumi 'Arten' Ishikawa

Comics Editor: Trabis 'Comic House'

Originally serialized in Kodansha's *Afternoon Monthly* manga magazine

Illustration Staff: Shintaro Suzuki, Takashi Heishiki, Akihiro Sugiyama,

Yasuhiro Torii, Souta Amada

Written and Illustrated by Akira Hiramoto

The following section contains more information about the life and work of Robert Johnson. To read more about this legendary musician, please turn the book to the end and continue on, reading from left to right.



About the Author

Akira Hiramoto achieved great popularity in Japan with the humorous manga series *Chinless Gen and Me*, which has been serialized in *Weekly Young Magazine* since 1998. *Chinless Gen and Me* showed Hiramoto to be a master of comedy, but this uniquely versatile creator made an extraordinary change in artistic direction in 2004 with the dark and visionary *Me and the Devil Blues*. Both series are still continuing their successful runs.



Afterword by Takashi "Hotoke" Nagai

Although I'd occasionally glance at a manga while at a friend's house, or waiting around in a café or laundromat, I hadn't really sat down and read any manga for nearly twenty-five years. I had never heard of *Afternoon* magazine, in which *Me and the Devil Blues* was first serialized, or Akira Hiramoto, and I had no idea what kind of manga or manga artists were popular. Such was my situation when I was approached about becoming the supervising editor of *Me and the Devil Blues*. My first question was: What the heck does a "supervising editor" do? So, I immediately looked up the title "supervising editor" in my dictionary, where it was defined as "One who supervises the editing and writing of a book." Having so little experience with modern manga, my initial reaction to taking on this demanding task was hesitation. However, when I learned that this manga would be based on the life of legendary bluesman Robert Johnson, I decided that I could not refuse. When I first heard the title *Me and the Devil Blues*, I immediately recognized it as the title of one of Johnson's songs, recorded in 1937.

As a way of introducing me to Akira Hiramoto, the publisher sent me a complete set of Hiramoto's signature manga, *Chinless Gen and Me*. It was absolutely fascinating. I got so sucked in that I neglected my job and just read one volume after another. Sometimes it took all my strength to keep from laughing out loud while reading on the train. There were even times when I became so absorbed with reading, that I stayed glued to the toilet long after finishing my business. However, I could not stop myself from wondering how an artist like Hiramoto, who was a master of comedy, would handle Robert Johnson, and the very thought of it made me a bit nervous. Would Robert Johnson be portrayed like *Chinless Gen* from the Hiramoto's previous manga title?

To myself, and to many blues freaks, Robert Johnson is one of the greats who sticks out among the many bluesmen of his era. He recorded only twenty-nine songs during the 1930s, and there are only two known photographs of him. But those twenty-nine songs have influenced not only blues, but virtually every facet of modern popular music. Johnson had a way of making it sound as if he was playing two guitars at the same time. His falsetto voice helped layer his songs with deep emotion and his wonderful lyrics prompted Bob Dylan to call him "the greatest poet of the twentieth century." Robert Johnson truly did leave his mark on musical history. Even seventy years after his death, Robert Johnson's blues still have the power to lure modern musicians. Eric Clapton, the Rolling Stones, and numerous other bands have recorded covers of Johnson's songs, and many more are sure to follow. Perhaps one of the most interesting things about Robert Johnson was his mysterious life. Robert Johnson wandered from place to place as if being chased by some unseen force. He was an infamous womanizer with a self-destructive streak. Johnson wrestled with addictions to gambling and alcohol until his mysterious death by poisoning in 1937. Numerous historians are still trying to verify all the facts about the life of Robert Johnson. Of course, many biographies have already been published, and he has been the subject of countless articles in a number of musical periodicals. I actually had the honor of contributing an essay on how Johnson has influenced my life, which appeared in the liner notes of the set

entitled Robert Johnson *The Complete Recordings*. Even today, I remember that essay with great pride. I realized while writing that essay that the more I read about Robert Johnson, the more of a mystery his life becomes. Many of those who've become acquainted with his music become utterly captivated, almost as if possessed by the devil himself. I think the keyword to describe him is "wanderer." I don't know if this is true of women, but I believe that all men have a desire to wander endlessly. On your way to work, or while taking the train back home, perhaps you too have thought of passing by your usual stop and getting off in some faraway land where you've never been. If you have ever felt that way, then you may have a little bit of Robert Johnson inside of you.

When I saw the first chapter of *Me and the Devil Blues*, my previous fears and reservations dissipated immediately. Akira Hiramoto took what he knew about Robert Johnson and created a heretofore-unknown bluesman by the name of RJ. I don't know what the average professional manga artist is capable of, but personally, I was shocked and surprised by the stunning difference between this work and Hiramoto's previous title *Chinless Gen and Me*. Had someone told me that it was a completely different artist I surely would have believed them. I felt as if all my expectations had been betrayed, but in a good way. Although this work is based on the life of Robert Johnson, as the story unfolds Hiramoto begins to improvise and the tale takes on a life of its own. At times, Hiramoto's fictional character RJ seems to be a perfect representation of Robert Johnson... and one begins to feel that perhaps the events in the story actually could have happened to the real Robert Johnson. Although this story takes place in the 1930s, for some reason the African American characters look like modern representations of the hip-hop generation. It gives one the feeling that this is not ancient history, but rather a modern story happening in our time. This may sound cheesy, but I feel that Hiramoto-kun's powerful artwork transports this otherwise historical tale into the reality of the modern world. I am sometimes surprised by the work's sheer power to arouse my imagination. Often when I finish reading it, I feel transported back to the desolate landscape of the Southern United States that I once visited long ago.

As the supervising editor, I have some idea where the story is going but, for some reason, every time I pick up the latest chapter, I find my expectations betrayed by Hiramoto. I constantly find myself saying things like "Whoa! So this is where he's gonna take the story," or "What? What the hell's gonna happen now?" and then going back to carefully reread each page. My pulse quickens with the turn of every page, and my only complaint is that after reaching the final page of the chapter, the final betrayal of my expectations. I must wait an entire month to find out what happens next. I don't know how the story will develop or what will become of RJ, but I can say one thing for sure. I look forward to being betrayed again by Hiramoto-kun's unexpected twists and turns.

West Road Blues Band Vocalist Takashi "Hotoke" Nagai

Musician Takashi "Hotoke" Nagai was born in 1950. Since founding the West Road Blues Band in 1972, he has been active in many areas not limited to the blues. He is well known for his essays and written works such as *Blues Paradise*. Nagai supervised the editing of the original Japanese publication of *Me and the Devil Blues*.

On Me and the Devil Blues

by Makoto Ayukawa

Hiramoto-san's *Me and the Devil Blues* is a work that strikes a chord deep in the heart of all music lovers. This work was written the way manga was meant to be, utilizing true freedom of expression. My own band, Sheena and the Rokkets, has a song called 'Bonnie and Clyde,' but I never imagined that Bonnie and Clyde would appear in the world of blues. This was the era of Al Capone and the Untouchables, and I have read that Skip James and Scrapper Blackwell, two bluesmen who heavily influenced Robert Johnson (RJ), had actually been known to brew their own moonshine and corn whiskey. The idea of Robert Johnson and Clyde Barrow on the road together is indeed quite thrilling. Showing us the racism and oppression of the old American South through the eyes of an African-American and a poor white man help lead a feeling of reality to the story.

I really felt the impact of Hiramoto's storytelling in the scene in which the powerful man in the small, country bar pours himself a glass of tea. When I saw the way he measured the amount of liquid he was pouring by sticking his finger in the glass, I thought surely Hiramoto must have spent a great deal of time in the company of blind bluesmen. In fact, everything about that scene gave me that feeling, along with a palpable sense of happiness. It reminded me of the stories I'd heard of twenties blues legend Blind Lemon Jefferson. Whenever he returned home he used to shake his liquor bottles, and judge by the sound whether or not someone had pilfered his stash while he was away. In any case, I can hardly wait to see how this story will unfold and what lies ahead for RJ.

This may sound a bit clichéd, but Robert Johnson's music far transcends the era in which he lived. In fact, RJ's sound still lives on in popular rock music today.

Eric Clapton's band Cream came onto the scene in the mid-sixties. Their signature song was a cover of Robert Johnson's 'Cross Roads.' This was the era of British Beat, and music fans were just beginning to turn their ears to the sounds of the Chicago Blues. Cream used the sounds of pre-war blues as building blocks with which to create an intense, improvisational sound that could even be called 'Art Rock.' They proceeded to redefine music for their generation. Not only that, Cream also propelled Robert Johnson (whom I will hereafter refer to as RJ) and his music from relative obscurity into the mainstream. Music that was once enjoyed only by the true blues enthusiast, became known to rock-and-roll fans the world over.

If you listen carefully, you will find that in fact RJ heavily influenced what became known as the Chicago Blues. The Beatles sang the song 'Roll Over Beethoven,' which was, of course, Chuck Berry's signature song, but Berry's guitar style can be traced back to boogie piano music and the rhythm and strumming style that RJ invented.

The Rolling Stones took their name from a Muddy Waters song with the same name. Their first song to top the British charts, 'Little Red Rooster,' was written by Howlin' Wolf. Elmore James, Jimmy Reed, Sonny Boy, Little Walter, Jonny Shines, Robert Junior Lockwood, and Leroy Foster were just a few of the many bluesmen who were directly influenced by RJ. They followed in his footsteps playing 'The Walking Blues,' 'Rolling and Tumbling,' and 'Dust My Broom' to name but a few. This was the force that powered what became known as rock and roll.

RJ died suddenly at the age of twenty-seven. In 1937, at his final recording session before his death, RJ sang in the song 'Me and the Devil Blues' about being buried by the highway so that his soul could continue its journey—by catching a Greyhound bus. But RJ need not worry about catching that bus, his spirit lives on, and you can find it riding the sound of every rock-and-roll song every written.

The deeper I fell under the spell of the blues, the more I found myself wishing that I, too, could ride that Greyhound bus, traveling down Highway 61 across the Mississippi Delta where the blues were born. My destination you ask? Why, of course I would head straight for the very crossroads where RJ sold his soul to the devil to become a great bluesman.

The opportunity presented itself in a most unexpected fashion. It happened when a friend of mine handed me a travel brochure on the land of the blues, Sheena and I had never much cared for package tours, so we used the itinerary on the brochure as reference, did as much research as we could, and came up with our own travel plan. RJ's crossroads were in the town of Clarksdale located near Memphis, Tennessee. Long ago it was a thriving distribution hub for the cotton industry. The Tokyo office of the Mississippi state government provided us with even more details on Clarksdale. We learned that the city's dying blues tradition was being preserved in a Delta Blues museum run by local volunteers. In 1937, the year before RJ died, the queen of the blues, Bessie Smith, lost her life in a car accident on Highway 61. Owing to the terrible racism that existed in the South during that period, she was brought from hospital to hospital before finally finding one that would treat her. The hospital where she breathed her last breath later became a hotel. We learned that since the 1940s, this hotel, known as the Riverside Hotel, has housed such blues greats as Sonny Boy Williamson and Robert Nighthawk. Naturally we made a reservation.

Our Greyhound journey started at 10 AM on Route 61 in New Orleans, Louisiana. Two hours later we arrived in the city of Baton Rouge, where the Rolling Stones once began an American tour. Of course, the town is also known for bluesman Slim Harpo. There we changed buses and boarded a bus that had come in from Texas. We headed north along the Mississippi River. At one point a torrent of rain began to fall, and the sound of thunder echoed through the bus. This type of sudden downpour generally happens once a day in the area. At each stop along the way, we saw the warm greetings and embraces of family members awaiting their loved ones. On that ten-hour bus ride we bore witness to the kindness, warmth, and purity of the people of Mississippi. Along the way, we passed a road sign for the town of Rolling Forks, the birthplace of Muddy Waters. It was dusk when we arrived in Clarksdale.

The bus stop was located outside of town where Highway 61 intersected with Highway 49, another road often referenced in blues lyrics. These were the very crossroads we had come to see. This town, once busy with cotton laborers and bluesmen, was now quiet and subdued. It had become a normal, rural town full of kindhearted folk who still respect the town's blues tradition. These days, the devil is nowhere to be found.

As I gazed upon the abandoned train station, beside the rusted railroad tracks, RJ's 'Love in Vain' began to play in my head.

It was at a plantation in this very town where Muddy Waters worked as a farmhand. When the Library of Congress came to town to record RJ, not realizing he had passed away,

they instead settled on recording Muddy Waters. This was the impetus for Muddy Waters' move to Chicago, and his subsequent reign as the king of Chicago's blues movement. This town became the setting of many a blues tale, and even today blues fans from all over the world visit for its summer blues festival. No doubt many of them enjoy an exciting stay at the Riverside Hotel, just as we did.

A few years ago, news that RJ's forty-second song had been discovered spread around the blues community. The song was an alternate take of a song previously recorded under the name "Traveling Riverside Blues." This song is known by RJ fans as the inspiration for Led Zeppelin's "Lemon Song." Only recently did I realize that Cream, in its version of "Cross Roads," borrowed a line from this song. In addition, the line "you can squeeze my lemon till the juice run down my leg" was the inspiration for the Sheena and the Rokkets' song "Lemon Tea." After hearing the Rolling Stones' versions of RJ's songs "Stop Breaking Down Blues," "Love in Vain," "From Four Until Late," and "Steady Rolling Man," we incorporated them into our own repertoire. In fact, "Me and the Devil Blues," supervising editor Takashi "Hotoke" Nagai, even put on an RJ tribute concert. I cannot even begin to quantify the effect RJ has had on my life.

The newly discovered recording of RJ's "Travelling Riverside Blues" uses the same format as that blues classic of classics "Rollin' and Tumblin'." However, if you search through the twenty-nine songs that RJ recorded, you won't find the title "Rollin' and Tumblin'" anywhere. That's because Robert Johnson instead assigned it the title "If I Had Possession Over Judgment Day." RJ truly made this blues standard his own.

By no means does RJ have a monopoly on "Rollin' and Tumblin'." The blues are owned by everyone, and are passed on from bluesman to bluesman. In 1929, Hambone Willie Newbern recorded the song under the title "Rollin' and Tumblin'" and a year earlier Garfield Akers recorded the song under the title "Dough Roller Blues."

The amazing thing about RJ is that he, a single man, was able to condense and represent the music of nearly every blues pioneer that came before him.

RJ not only represents the great Mississippi Delta bluesmen like Charlie Patton, Son House, and Skip James, but traces of the Texas blues, the City blues, and even vaudeville can be heard in his music. The titles RJ gave his songs and his lyrics are evidence of RJ's poetic genius. In the simple hotel room that functioned as his recording studio, this undeniable brilliance was captured forever.

The supple, steel-like quality of RJ's voice mixes with his dark falsetto, as he strums a fierce, unending rhythmic beat. The way RJ maintains this rhythm while simultaneously playing high notes in triplets, and all the while sliding his bottleneck up and down the neck of the guitar is nothing short of a miracle. On top of that, the structure of his songs is pure perfection. It all started with RJ. The popularity of blues music grew, and subsequently rock and roll spread throughout the world.

In the early days of the Rolling Stones, when they were still called "Little Boy Blue and the Blue Boys," I'm sure that Keith Richards and Brian Jones played along with RJ's "32-20 Blues" everyday, until they mastered its rhythm. No doubt there were times when they felt like giving up, after hearing RJ play with such perfection all on his own. However, Keith and Brian stayed at it until the two of them picked up RJ's style, and we're able to capture RJ's

sound when combining their two guitars and playing together. That was the era of the electric guitar and the heyday of both the "band sound" and the Chicago Blues.

The Stones are still going strong. This year they released a new album and started a world tour. Who knows, as I write this, perhaps they have just finished a concert somewhere. No doubt Keith is walking up to the hotel room door of his bandmates and asking them to put on one of RJ's songs.

It was way back in 1961 when RJ's 78 recordings were first released on an LP under the title *King of the Delta Blues Singers*. At the time, I had never even heard of RJ, and certainly would have had no way of procuring a copy of the LP. I first learned of the blues through the music of the Stones, the Animals, the Kinks and other British bands. Soon blues albums, particularly of the Chicago Blues artists, were appearing in Japanese record shops. But the first time I ever heard the name Robert Johnson and learned of his album was when I saw the photo on the cover of Bob Dylan's fifth album *Bringing it All Back Home*. Among the many albums scattered about in the background of that photo was RJ's. It was several years before RJ's record finally made it out to the countryside where I grew up. In 1970 a collection of unused outtakes was released as "Vol. 2." The cover of the album featured a wonderful illustration of RJ recording in his hotel room. At the time, it had been thought that no pictures of RJ existed.

In recent years, research on RJ's life has progressed, photos have surfaced, and his reputation as a legendary bluesman has grown tenfold. The RJ CD set *Complete Recordings*, which contains every RJ song in the order it was originally recorded, has become a worldwide bestseller. The newly discovered recording I mentioned earlier, "Traveling Riverside Blues (take 2)," was released as a bonus track on the CD version of *King of the Delta Blues Singers*.

I highly recommend that as you enjoy this volume of *Me and the Devil Blues* you listen to the new, digitally remastered RJ collection.

Lastly, as both a musician and a music lover, I would like to express my gratitude to Akira Hiramoto for producing this unique work about the world of blues and its most legendary character. I anxiously await the continuation of RJ's adventures.

Makoto Ayukawa (Sheena & the Rokkets)

Makoto Ayukawa—musician. Born in 1948 in the city of Kurume in Fukuoka Prefecture, he made his musical debut in 1970 as a member of the band Sunhouse. Since forming Sheena & the Rokkets in 1978, he has been a major figure in the world of Japanese rock. In addition to his numerous hit albums, he is the author of *DOSV Blues* and other books.

www.mingusgreener.com

stephen
gato
Jindoren

He 田 *Div*